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ABSTRACT

In response to the National Education Goals panel's recognition of the role that parents can have in children's learning and school performance, the "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools K-8" was conducted to determine the ways schools are engaging parents in their children's education and the extent to which parents are responding to those involvement opportunities. Questionnaires were sent to a nationally representative sample of 900 public schools enrolling kindergarten through eigth grade students. The survey looked at the kinds of school-home communication schools establish, kinds of activities schools sponsor, kinds of volunteer activities schools make available, the extent to which parents are included in school decision making, and other factors that influence school efforts to increase parent involvement. Among the findings highlighted are the following: (1) most schools initiated communications with parents to inform them about school curricula and student performance; (2) most schools provided parents with information designed to promote learning at home and on topics related to child-rearing issues; (3) the majority of schools held various activities, such as parent conferences and academic exhibitions, intended to encourage parent involvement; (5) parents were more likely to attend events that featured some interaction with the students' teachers; (6) parent attendance at school-sponsored events varied by geographic region, poverty concentration, and minority enrollment; (7) in general, schools do not include parents in very much school decision making; (8) the majority of schools provided parents opportunities to volunteer both inside and outside the classroom, to assist in fundraising and attend PTA meetings, though the percentage of schools satisfied with the degree of parent participation in these activities decreased as minority and poor student enrollment increased; and (9) lack of time on the part of parents was most often named as the greatest barrier impeding parent involvement. (Three appendices include survey methodology and data reliability and the survey form.) (HTH)

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Statistical Analysis Report

January 1998

Parent Involvement in Children's Education: Efforts by Public Elementary Schools

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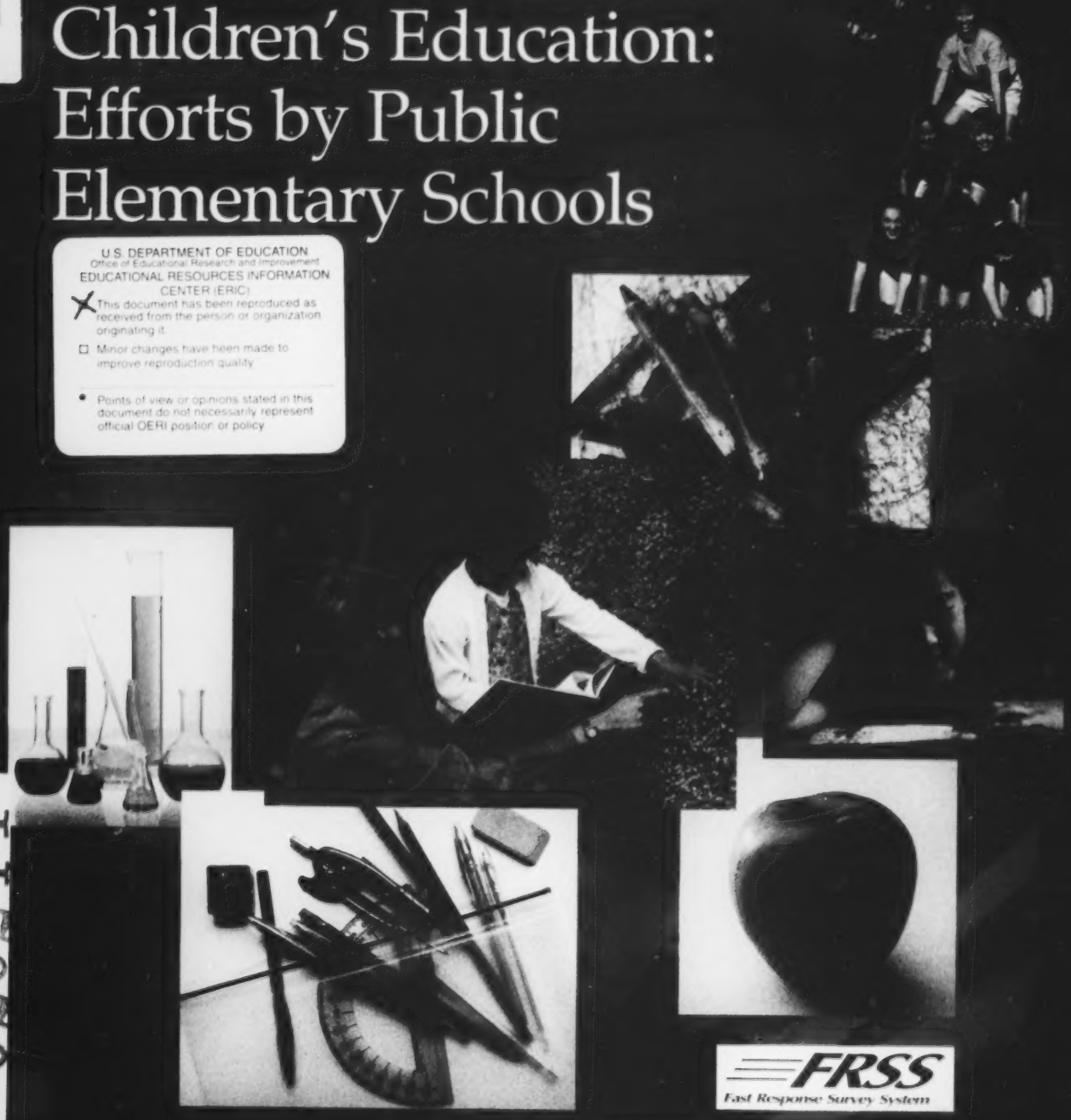

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Parent Involvement In Children's Education: Efforts by Public Elementary Schools

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Highlights

- Most public elementary schools (K-8) initiated communications with parents to inform them about school curricula and student performance. Between 83 and 85 percent provided information about the school's overall performance on standardized tests, furnished information about the goals and objectives of the instructional program, and issued interim reports on students' progress during grading periods (figure 1).

- Between 82 and 89 percent of all public elementary schools provided parents with information designed to promote learning at home and on topics related to child-rearing issues (table 1). Information on community services was more available in larger schools, schools in cities, and schools with minority enrollments of 50 percent or more (figure 2).

- During the 1995-96 school year, the majority of public elementary schools (84 to 97 percent) held various activities intended to encourage parent involvement (table 4). These included open houses or back-to-school nights, scheduled parent-teacher conferences, arts events, athletic demonstrations, and academic exhibitions.

- Schools reported that parents were more likely to attend events that featured some interaction with students' teachers. Half or more indicated that "most or all" parents attended conferences with teachers and school open houses or back-to-school nights (table 4).

- Parent attendance at school-sponsored events varied by geographic region, poverty concentration, and minority enrollment in the school (table 5). For example, while 72 percent of schools with a low concentration of poverty reported that "most or all" parents attended the school open house, 28 percent of schools with a high poverty concentration reported such high parent attendance. Similar differences were found on this variable when schools with low minority enrollments were compared to those with high minority enrollments (63 versus 30 percent). Schools in the Southeast also had considerably lower rates of parent attendance at the school open house than schools in other geographic regions (25 versus 46 to 67 percent).

- In general, public elementary schools do not include parents in school decisionmaking to a great extent. One-quarter to one-third of all schools included parents to a moderate extent in most decisionmaking, with input on the development of parent involvement activities taken into consideration to a great extent by 31 percent of schools (table 6).

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- The majority of public elementary schools (79 percent) reported having an advisory group or policy council that includes parents (table 7). With the exception of decisions about evaluating teachers, schools with parents on advisory groups were more likely to consider parent input on all issues when compared to schools without these kinds of groups (figure 8).

- During the 1995-96 school year, over 90 percent of all elementary schools provided parents opportunities to volunteer both inside and outside the classroom, to assist in fundraising, and to attend meetings of the parent-teacher organization (not shown in tables). However, the percentage of schools satisfied with the degree of parent involvement in different activities decreased as the minority enrollment or the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch reached 50 percent or more (table 10).

- Given a list of concerns that might impede parent involvement in schools, the barrier named by the highest percentage of schools was lack of time on the part of parents (87 percent) (figure 12). Lack of time on the part of school staff created barriers for 56 percent of schools, and 48 percent indicated that lack of staff training in working with parents was a significant barrier. Lack of parent education to help with schoolwork, cultural/socioeconomic and language differences between parents and staff, parent and staff attitudes, and safety in the area after school hours were considered barriers in a higher percentage of schools with poverty concentrations and minority enrollments of 50 percent or more than in schools low on these characteristics (table 13).

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Introduction

With the passage of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the commitment to improve the education of all students has become a national priority. Yet preparing students for the challenges of the future is not the responsibility of schools alone. Discussions on how to improve the quality of education in America have focused attention on the roles of family and community, and research supports the belief that high-quality education cannot be successfully accomplished without the active involvement of parents. Studies have shown that parent involvement in children's learning can have a positive effect on students' achievement and reduce the school dropout rate (U.S. Department of Education 1994). In an effort to encourage and increase the participation of parents in their children's schooling, Congress added an eighth goal to the National Education Goals that calls on schools to adopt policies and practices that actively engage parents and families in partnerships to support the academic work of children at home and shared educational decisionmaking at school.

In response to the Goals Panel's recognition of the role that parents can have in children's learning and school performance, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students (NIEARS) in the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Education Goals Panel requested this survey. The study was designed to provide information on the ways that schools are engaging parents in their children's education and the extent to which parents are responding to the opportunities for involvement that schools provide. The study was also intended to provide data that could be compared with data on the same topic collected from parents in the National Household Education Survey (NHES) in 1996, as well as those collected in the Prospects study,[1] initiated in 1991 to monitor trends in parent involvement in children's education.

This report presents the findings from the *Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8* conducted for NCES by Westat, a research firm in Rockville, Maryland. The survey was conducted through the NCES Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) during spring 1996. FRSS is a survey system designed to collect small amounts of issue-oriented data with minimal burden on respondents and within a relatively short time frame. Short questionnaires were sent to a nationally representative sample of 900 public schools enrolling kindergarten through eighth grade students. Principals were asked to either complete the survey or assign its completion to the person most knowledgeable about parent involvement programs and activities at the school. Data have been

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[1] "Prospects: The Congressionally-Mandated Study of Educational Growth and Opportunity (1991-1994)."

weighted to national estimates of all public schools serving grades K-8. Appendix A provides a detailed discussion of the sample and survey methodology. A table of standard errors for the figures in this report appears in appendix B, and the survey questionnaire is reproduced in appendix C.

The *Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8* addressed the following issues:

- The kinds of **communication** schools establish to provide parents with information about the goals of the school, their children's progress, and topics relevant to assisting students outside of school.
- The kinds of **activities** schools sponsor that are designed to inform parents about their children's performance, including academic, artistic, and athletic demonstrations, and the typical parent attendance at these activities.
- The kinds of **volunteer activities** schools make available to parents, and the extent to which parents participate in these activities.
- The extent to which parents are included in **decisionmaking** regarding selected school issues.
- Other factors that influence school efforts to increase parent involvement in their children's education.

Survey findings are presented for all public schools serving grades K-8, and by the following school characteristics (defined in the Glossary of Terms in appendix A):

- Size of enrollment: small (less than 300), moderate (300-599), and large (600 or more).
- Urbanicity: city, urban fringe, town, and rural.
- Geographic region: Northeast, Southeast, Central, and West.
- Percent minority enrollment: very low (less than 5), low (5-19), moderate (20-49), and high (50 or more).
- Poverty concentration, as defined by the percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch: low (less than 25), moderate (25-49), and high (50 or more).

It should be noted here that characteristics of schools are often interrelated. For example, in this study the poverty concentration in a school and its minority composition were highly related, with 87 percent of schools with a high minority enrollment also identified as having a high concentration of poverty (see table A-1 in appendix A). City schools also were more likely to have a high concentration of poverty. Minority enrollment was correlated with both urbanicity and school size (table A-2 in appendix A). However, because of the relatively small sample size used in this study, it is difficult to separate the independent effects of these variables.

All comparative statements made in this report have been tested for statistical significance through chi-square tests or *t*-tests adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni adjustment and are significant at the 0.05 level or better. However, not all statistically significant comparisons have been presented, since some were not of substantive importance.

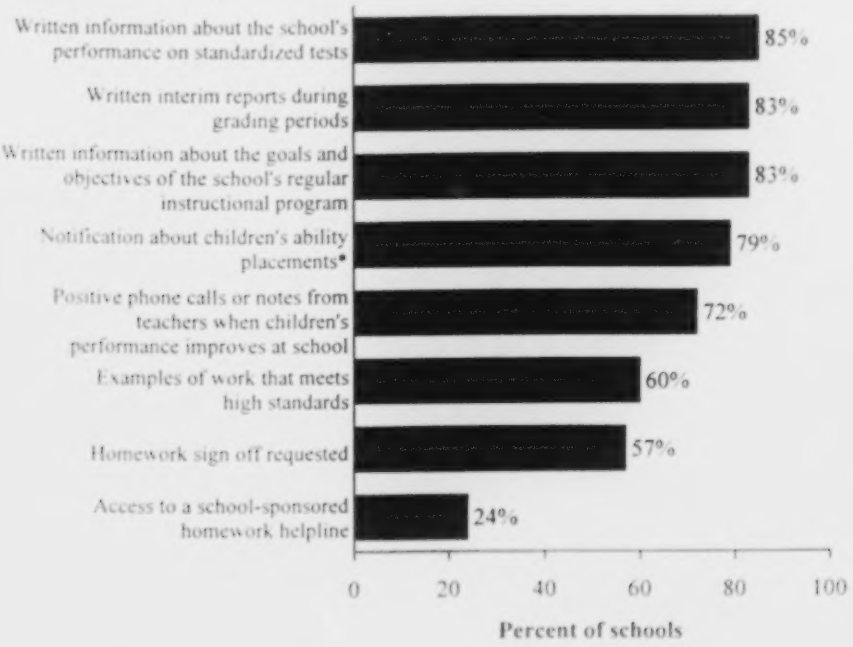
Communication Channels Established by Schools to Inform and Assist Parents

Schools establish both school-to-home and home-to-school communication channels to convey and receive information. In this survey, schools were asked about whether, and how, they provide parents with information on the school's curriculum, students' achievement, parenting and child-rearing issues, and the creation of home environments that are conducive to learning. Schools were also asked if they include visits to students' homes in their educational programs and whether they provide translations or interpreter services for parents with limited English skills.

Information on School Programs and Student Achievement

Information about school programs, children's placements, and children's progress are basic communications commonly initiated by schools to help families understand and monitor their children's learning and school experiences. From a list describing eight forms of communication that can occur between parents and staff, more than half of all elementary schools (57 to 85 percent) reported "always" or "frequently" using seven of the forms (figure 1); the eighth form listed, communication using a school-sponsored homework helpline, was used much less frequently (24 percent).

Figure 1.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported always or frequently communicating with parents by various means: 1996



*Based on the estimated number of schools indicating that they group students by ability--39,800 (65 percent).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Schools were very likely to initiate communications that inform parents about school curricula and student performance. Most K-8 schools (85 percent) reported always or frequently providing parents with written information about the school's overall performance on standardized tests. A high percentage of schools (83 percent) also gave parents written information about the goals and objectives of the school's regular instructional program. This same percentage reported sending home interim reports on individual student's progress during grading periods. Finally, 79 percent of schools that reported grouping students by ability also informed parents about their children's ability group placements.

Schools use other means to provide information to parents, as well. About three-quarters of all K-8 schools (72 percent) reported always or frequently issuing positive phone calls or notes to parents when their children's performance improves. In addition, more than half of all schools (60 percent) gave parents examples of work that meets the school's criteria for high standards.

Schools also initiate communications concerning children's homework, with 57 percent indicating they always or frequently requested parents to sign off on their children's homework. About one-quarter of schools (24 percent) provided a homework helpline for parents to obtain information on assignments.

Communications About How to Help at Home

Researchers on school-family partnerships have reported that schools that help families feel welcome and show them how to improve learning at home are likely to have more support from parents and more motivated students (Epstein 1991). This survey asked elementary schools if they provide information on various topics intended to assist parents outside of school. Three of the topics related directly to how parents can help their children learn at home: helping with homework; developing study skills; and providing learning activities outside of school. The other four topics related to child-rearing issues: nutrition, health, or safety; community services available to help children or their families; parenting skills; and child or adolescent development. For each of these topics, between 82 and 89 percent of all schools reported supplying parents with information in one form or another (table 1).

Table 1.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported providing information to parents on selected topics: 1996

Topic	Percent	Standard error
Parents helping children learn at home		
Helping with homework	89	1.3
Developing study skills	85	1.4
Learning activities outside of school	83	1.6
Child-rearing issues		
Nutrition, health, or safety	88	1.3
Community services to help children and families	88	1.7
Parenting skills	86	1.5
Child or adolescent development	82	1.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

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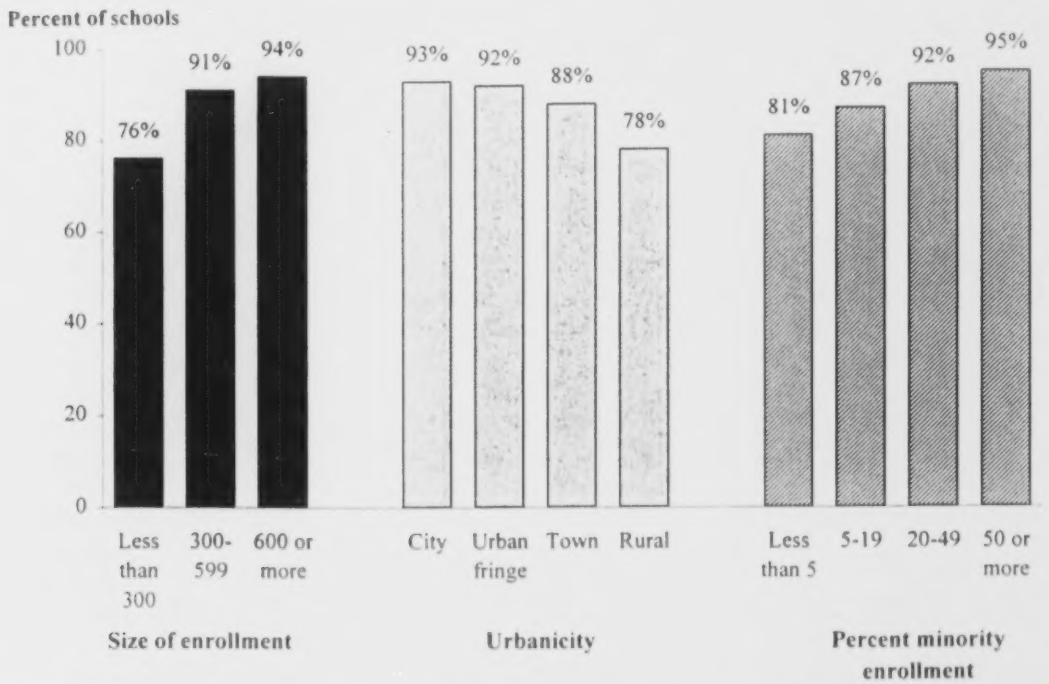
Providing information to parents about community services, such as social service agencies, was the only one of these topics that varied by any school characteristics. Information on community services was related to school size, urbanicity, and minority enrollment. While 76 percent of small schools reported offering this information to parents, more than 90 percent of moderately sized and large schools did so (figure 2). Similarly, 78 percent of rural schools provided such information, compared to 93 percent of schools in cities. In addition, nearly all (95 percent) of schools with minority enrollments of 50 percent or more offered community service information to parents, while 81 percent of those with very low minority enrollments (less than 5 percent) do so. No differences were found, however, when schools were compared according to their concentration of poverty, as defined by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (not shown in figure).

Figure 2.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported providing parents with information on community services, by selected school characteristics: 1996

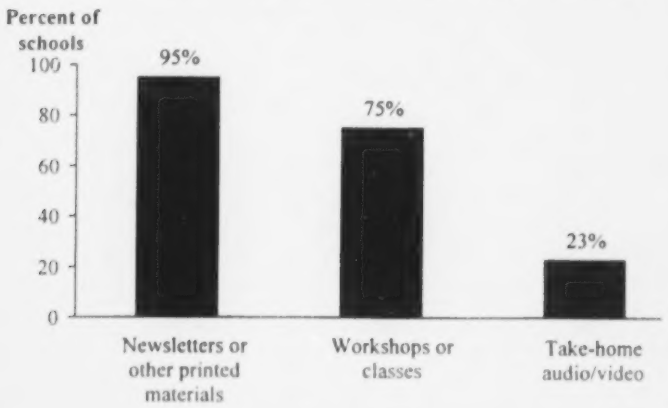


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Forms of School-to-Parent Communication

The majority of elementary schools (95 percent) relied on newsletters or other printed material to pass on information to parents (figure 3). About one-quarter of all schools offered take-home audio/visual materials relevant to these topics, and 75 percent of schools sponsored workshops or classes to inform parents on these issues. However, use of workshops varied somewhat depending on school size, urbanicity, and minority enrollment. Small schools were less likely than larger schools to use workshops (61 versus 79-82 percent), schools in rural areas were less likely to do so than schools in urban fringe areas and cities (58 versus 83-86 percent), and schools with minority enrollments below 5 percent were less likely than schools with minority enrollments of 50 percent or more to present workshops or classes for parents (63 versus 85 percent) (figure 4).

Figure 3.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported using selected methods to provide information to parents on various topics: 1996



NOTE: The topics were helping with homework; nutrition, health, or safety; community services to help children and families; parenting skills; developing study skills; learning activities outside of school; and child or adolescent development. A school was counted as using that method if information on any of the topics was provided to parents using that method.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

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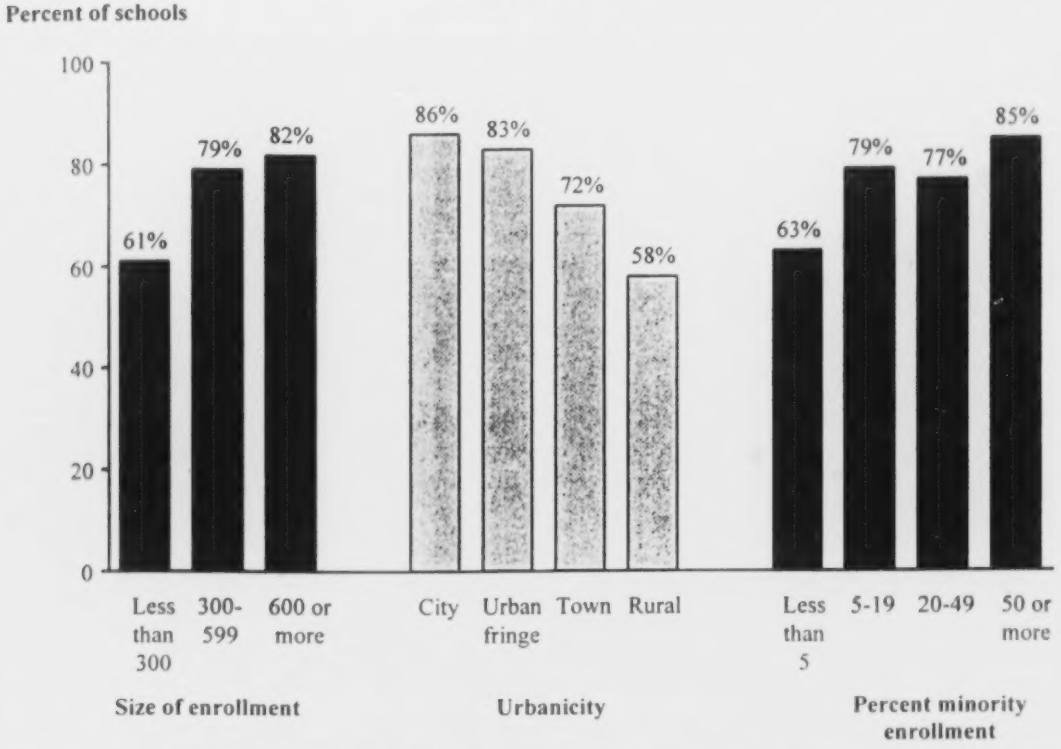
Figure 4.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported sponsoring workshops or classes to inform parents about various topics, by selected school characteristics: 1996



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Home Visits

In about two-thirds (64 percent) of all K-8 schools, staff made visits to students' homes, but the likelihood varied according to certain school characteristics (table 2). Moderately sized and large schools were more likely than small schools to report including home visits in their programs (68-70 versus 52 percent). In addition, the percentage of schools where staff made home visits increased as the concentration of poverty in the school increased (44 percent of schools with a low concentration of poverty, 66 percent of schools with a moderate concentration of poverty, and 80 percent of schools with a high concentration of poverty). The percentage of schools where staff made home visits was higher for schools with minority enrollments below 20 percent than for schools with minority enrollments of 50 percent or more (52-60 versus 76 percent).

Table 2.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported that staff made visits to students' homes, by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Percent	Standard error
All schools	64	2.0
Size of enrollment		
Less than 300	52	5.5
300-599	68	2.6
600 or more	70	3.3
Urbanicity		
City	71	3.5
Urban fringe	61	4.6
Town	69	4.9
Rural	56	5.4
Geographic region		
Northeast	59	5.0
Southeast	75	3.5
Central	56	5.0
West	69	3.2
Percent minority enrollment		
Less than 5	52	4.3
5-19	60	4.4
20-49	74	4.0
50 or more	76	2.8
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*		
Less than 25	44	4.4
25-49	66	4.0
50 or more	80	2.1

*Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Those schools that reported that staff made visits to students' homes also were asked to select from a list of three the types of staff who made these visits. Included in the list were teachers, home/school coordinators, and school counselors. Schools could also indicate any other staff who made home visits in an "other" category. While in 73 percent of elementary schools teachers performed this task, three-quarters of schools also wrote in other school staff who made visits to students' homes (figure 5). Staff named frequently were principals, assistant principals, school nurses, and social workers. School counselors made home visits in 61 percent of schools where home visits were made, and home/school coordinators in 21 percent of schools. Visits by home/school coordinators were more prevalent in schools with a high concentration of poverty and high minority enrollment (30 and 34 percent) than in schools with lower enrollments in each characteristic (18 percent or less) (figure 6).

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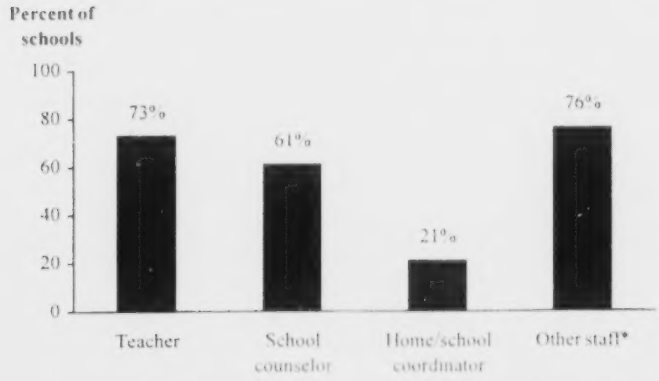
Figure 5.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported that various staff members made visits to students' homes: 1996

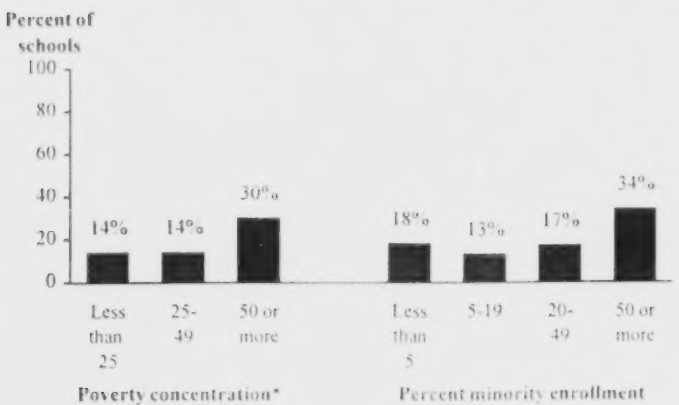


*Includes school principal and assistant principal, school nurse, and school social worker.

NOTE: Percents were based on the estimated number of schools reporting that staff made home visits--39,300 (64 percent).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Figure 6.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported that home visits were made by a home/ school coordinator, by poverty concentration and minority enrollment: 1996



*Poverty concentration is defined by the percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. These data were missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: Percents were based on the estimated number of schools reporting that staff made home visits--39,300 (64 percent).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Schools were also asked to indicate the percentage of families in the school who received at least one home visit during the 1995-96 school year. In schools that reported home visits, a mean of 15 percent of families received at least one home visit during this time period (table 3). A higher mean percentage of families -- approximately one-fifth -- were visited in schools with high concentrations of poverty or minority enrollments, compared to schools with less than 50 percent concentrations of poverty (10 to 13 percent) or minority enrollments (10 to 15 percent).

Table 3.—Mean percent of families in the school who received at least one home visit during the 1995-96 school year, as reported by public elementary schools (K-8) that reported home visits, by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Mean percent of families	Standard error
All schools[1]	15	0.9
Size of enrollment		
Less than 300	20	2.4
300-599	15	1.3
600 or more	13	1.2
Percent minority enrollment		
Less than 5	14	1.6
5-19	10	1.3
20-49	15	1.4
50 or more	21	1.8
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch[2]		
Less than 25	10	1.7
25-49	13	1.6
50 or more	20	1.4

[1]Based on the estimated number of schools indicating that staff made home visits--39,300 (64 percent).

[2]Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

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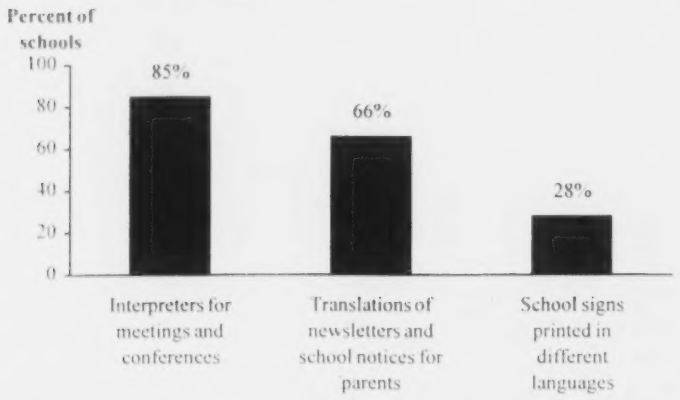
Provisions for Parents with Limited English Skills

About half (56 percent) of all K-8 schools enrolled some students whose parents had limited English skills (not shown in tables). Of these schools, the majority (85 percent) provided interpreters for school meetings or parent-teacher conferences (figure 7); 66 percent provided translations of printed materials, such as newsletters or school notices; and 28 percent printed school signs in different languages.

Figure 7.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported providing various services for parents with limited English skills: 1996



NOTE: Percents were based on the estimated number of schools reporting parents with limited English skills--34,000 (56 percent).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

School-Sponsored Activities to Promote Parent Involvement

Overall, during the 1995-96 school year the majority of public elementary schools held activities intended to encourage parent involvement (table 4). Ninety-seven percent of all schools held an open house or back-to-school night, and 92 percent scheduled schoolwide parent-teacher conferences. Schools also held events designed specifically to exhibit students' work or demonstrate their artistic accomplishments and athletic abilities. Arts events, such as theatrical, dance, or musical performances, were held by 96 percent of schools. Athletic demonstrations, such as team competitions or field days, were held by 85 percent of schools. Academic exhibitions, such as science fairs, were held by 84 percent of schools.

Table 4.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated that various kinds of activities were held during 1995-96, and their estimates of the typical parent attendance for each type of activity: 1996

Type of activity	Held activity		Typical parent attendance*									
			Most or all		More than half		About half		Less than half		Few	
	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.
Open house or back-to-school night	97	0.8	49	1.9	31	1.6	13	1.4	6	0.9	1	0.4
Arts events such as plays or dance or musical performances	96	0.8	36	2.1	30	2.0	16	1.6	13	1.3	5	0.9
Regularly-scheduled schoolwide parent-teacher conferences	92	1.2	57	2.1	21	1.9	11	1.3	9	1.1	3	0.6
Sports events such as field days or other athletic demonstrations or events	85	1.5	12	1.4	21	2.6	20	2.0	30	2.1	17	1.9
Science fairs or other academic demonstrations or events	84	1.8	19	1.6	24	2.4	20	2.1	23	2.1	14	1.6

*Percents in these columns are based on the estimated percent of schools that reported holding each type of event in 1995-96.

NOTE: s.e. is standard error. Because of rounding, percents may not add to 100.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Parent Attendance at School Events

Although schools almost universally sponsored various programs for parents, parents frequently did not attend these events. School events that feature some interaction with students' teachers appear to attract more parents than those that exhibit student performances or demonstrations. Parents were more likely to attend conferences with their children's teachers than any other type of school event open to parents (table 4), with 57 percent of public elementary schools that held conferences indicating that "most or all" parents attended regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences held during the 1995-96 school year. Attendance at an open house or back-to-school night was also very high, with about half (49 percent) of the schools that held such events reporting that most or all parents attended. In contrast, about one-third of all schools (36 percent) indicated that most or all parents attended arts events in which their children participated, and even fewer schools reported high levels of parent attendance at academic events such as science fairs (19 percent) or sports events (12 percent) when their children participated in these events.

While there was little variability among schools in the sponsoring of activities open to parents, parent attendance at such events showed variation across certain school characteristics (table 5). Schools in the Southeast had considerably lower rates of parent attendance at teacher conferences, open houses, and arts events than schools in other geographic regions, with fewer schools in this region reporting that "most or all" parents typically attended these events. Relatively few schools in any region reported high levels of attendance at sports events and academic demonstrations.

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Table 5.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated that "most or all" parents typically attended various kinds of activities held in 1995-96, by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Parent-teacher conferences		Open house or back-to-school night		Arts events		Sports events or field days		Science fairs or academic demonstrations	
	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.
All schools[1]	57	2.1	49	1.9	36	2.1	12	1.4	19	1.6
Size of enrollment										
Less than 300	65	5.5	58	5.1	43	5.4	16	3.8	25	5.1
300-599	56	2.9	46	3.1	33	2.6	13	2.4	18	2.7
600 or more	51	3.0	44	3.3	34	3.1	6	2.0	16	2.6
Urbanicity										
City	48	3.8	42	3.2	27	3.7	12	3.0	12	2.8
Urban fringe	62	3.5	53	3.4	40	3.9	9	2.5	19	3.7
Town	63	4.5	48	4.1	39	3.9	12	3.2	22	3.9
Rural	55	4.8	52	4.3	37	4.4	15	3.5	23	3.9
Geographic region										
Northeast	68	3.9	67	4.4	36	4.4	9	2.9	21	4.3
Southeast	20	4.0	25	3.4	20	3.6	6	2.1	10	2.5
Central	70	4.4	57	4.2	48	4.0	18	3.5	27	4.1
West	61	3.7	46	3.7	36	4.8	12	3.1	17	3.3
Percent minority enrollment										
Less than 5	66	4.6	63	4.3	47	4.8	21	3.3	27	3.7
5-19	70	4.5	58	4.4	41	5.3	13	3.3	31	4.3
20-49	50	4.2	38	4.6	35	3.9	6	2.2	11	3.2
50 or more	37	3.6	30	3.2	17	2.5	5	1.4	3	0.9
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch[2]										
Less than 25	76	3.4	72	3.2	50	4.2	19	3.7	35	4.1
25-49	58	3.8	48	4.5	37	3.1	12	2.8	17	3.2
50 or more	39	3.3	28	2.2	21	2.7	5	1.2	6	1.6

[1]Based on the estimated percent of schools that reported holding each type of event in 1995-96 (see table 4).

[2]Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: s.e. is standard error.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Parent attendance at school-sponsored events was related to the concentration of poverty in the school, as defined by the percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. In general, as the concentration of poverty in the school increased, reports of high parent attendance decreased. For example, while 72 percent of schools with a low concentration of poverty reported that most or all parents attended the school open house, 48 percent of schools with a moderate poverty concentration, and 28 percent of schools with a high poverty concentration reported that most or all parents attended the open house. Attendance at sports events was less markedly related to poverty concentration, where differences were found

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between schools with low and high concentrations of poverty (19 versus 5 percent), but not when either of these groups was compared to schools with a moderate concentration of poverty. A similar pattern to that shown for concentration of poverty was found when the percentage of minority students enrolled in schools was taken into account. Schools with minority enrollments below 20 percent reported greater parent attendance at all events than schools with minority enrollments of 20 percent or more.

Parent Participation in School Decisionmaking

Goal 8 of the National Education Goals specifies that schools will actively engage parents and families in a partnership that supports the academic work of children at home and shared educational decisionmaking at school. However, in general, schools did not report considering parent input to a great extent in making decisions on school issues (see table 6). For most of the topics included in the survey, schools indicated that parent input is considered to a moderate or small extent. Schools reported giving input from parents the most consideration on the issue that directly relates to parents--the development of parent involvement activities. Approximately one-third (31 percent) of schools considered parent input to a great extent on this issue, and 37 percent considered it to a moderate extent. At the other extreme, parent input is not a factor in decisions regarding the evaluation and monitoring of teachers, with 74 percent of schools indicating that parent input is not considered in this process. Consideration of parent input did not vary across school characteristics (not shown in tables).

Table 6.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated the extent to which parent input is considered in making decisions on various school issues: 1996

Issue	Great extent		Moderate extent		Small extent		Not at all	
	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.
Allocation of funds	12	1.4	27	1.9	40	2.0	21	1.9
Curriculum or overall instructional program	9	1.3	38	2.3	44	2.7	9	1.2
The design of special programs	11	1.4	35	2.0	44	2.4	11	1.4
Library books and materials	6	1.2	26	1.9	47	2.4	22	1.6
Discipline policies and procedures	12	1.2	38	1.8	35	1.9	14	1.4
Health-related topics or policies, such as drug or alcohol abuse	13	1.7	34	1.8	39	2.0	14	1.4
Monitoring or evaluating teachers	1	0.4	4	0.8	21	1.8	74	1.7
Developing parent involvement activities	31	2.4	37	2.3	27	2.0	5	1.2

NOTE: s.e. is standard error. Because of rounding, percents may not add to 100.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

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Parent Input Through School Councils

The majority of public elementary schools (79 percent) reported having an advisory group or policy council that includes parents (table 7). Inclusion of parents in such an advisory group was related to the size of the school and the percentage of minority students enrolled in the school. Specifically, small schools were less likely than moderately sized or large schools to report including parents on such councils (66 versus 83-85 percent), whereas schools with minority enrollments of 20 percent or more were more likely to report having an advisory group that includes parents than were schools with minority enrollments of under 5 percent (86-89 versus 70 percent). Schools in the West also were more likely to report including parents in an advisory group than were schools in the Northeast and Central regions of the country.

Table 7.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported having an advisory group or policy council that includes parents, by school characteristics: 1996

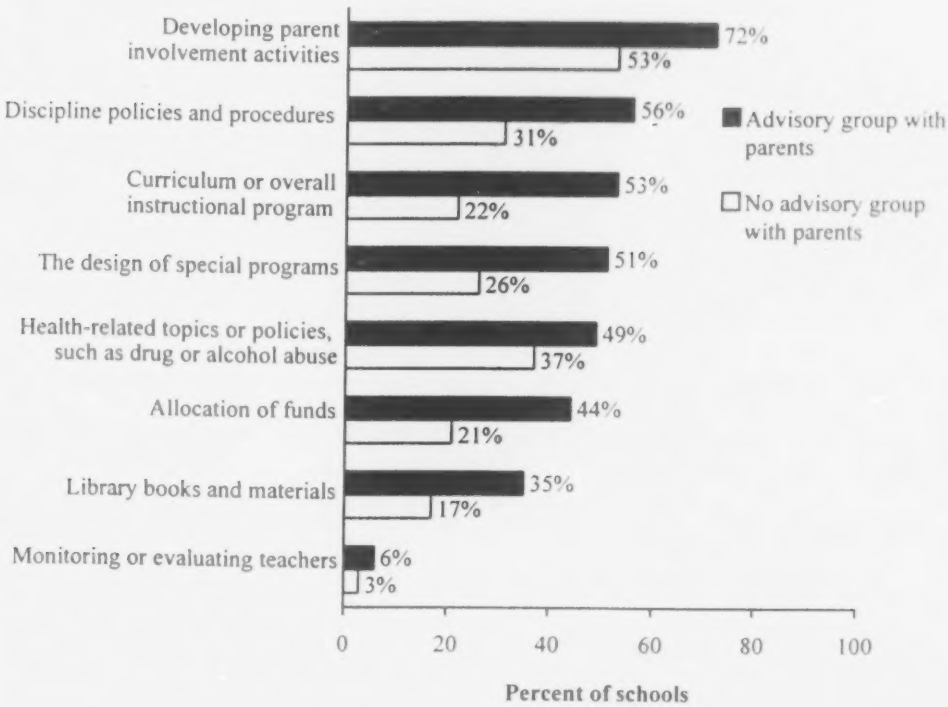
School characteristic	Percent	Standard error
All schools	79	2.1
Size of enrollment		
Less than 300	66	5.2
300-599	85	2.3
600 or more	83	2.4
Urbanicity		
City	88	2.7
Urban fringe	80	4.2
Town	74	4.9
Rural	76	4.8
Geographic region		
Northeast	72	4.6
Southeast	83	3.1
Central	72	5.1
West	89	3.3
Percent minority enrollment		
Less than 5	70	3.9
5-19	76	4.5
20-49	86	3.3
50 or more	89	2.1
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*		
Less than 25	73	5.0
25 to 49	79	3.6
50 or more	84	2.2

*Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Do schools with advisory groups report giving more consideration to parent input in making decisions on school issues than schools without advisory groups? With the exception of decisions about monitoring or evaluating teachers, schools with advisory groups or policy councils that included parents were more likely to report considering parent input to a great or moderate extent than were schools without these kinds of groups (figure 8).

Figure 8.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported considering parent input in school decisionmaking to a great or moderate extent, by inclusion of parents in an advisory group or policy council: 1996



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Voluntary Written Agreements

Voluntary written agreements (e.g., compacts or learning contracts) are pledges that define the expectations and mutual responsibilities of schools and parents as partners in student learning and academic success. Some school districts have adopted such agreements, and school-parent compacts are included in the reauthorized guidelines of Title I funding.

About half of all schools (48 percent) reported employing these voluntary written agreements with individual parents (table 8). Voluntary written agreements were more prevalent in city and urban

fringe schools (56 and 58 percent, respectively) than in schools in towns or rural areas (38 and 39 percent). While 61 percent of the schools with minority enrollments of 50 percent or more used voluntary written agreements, 43 percent of schools with less than 20 percent minority enrollments reported using such agreements. The use of voluntary written agreements did not show differences by the concentration of poverty in the school.

Table 8.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported employing voluntary written agreements (e.g., compacts or learning contracts) between school and parents, and the percent requesting such agreements from all parents, by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	School uses written agreement		Agreements requested from all parents[1]	
	Percent	Standard error	Percent	Standard error
All schools	48	2.1	33	3.0
Size of enrollment				
Less than 300	36	5.7	23	5.9
300-599	53	2.8	36	3.9
600 or more	52	3.5	34	4.0
Urbanicity				
City	56	3.4	46	5.2
Urban fringe	58	3.6	28	4.5
Town	38	3.9	28	6.3
Rural	39	4.9	25	5.5
Geographic region				
Northeast	45	5.2	23	5.6
Southeast	53	4.4	43	5.4
Central	45	4.6	22	6.0
West	49	3.5	40	4.7
Percent minority enrollment				
Less than 5	43	4.9	19	5.8
5-19	43	4.9	16	4.5
20-49	47	4.9	42	5.3
50 or more	61	3.1	52	4.2
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch[2]				
Less than 25	45	4.2	16	4.6
25 to 49	48	4.2	22	5.0
50 or more	53	2.8	51	4.7

[1]Based on the estimated number of schools indicating that written agreements are used--29,500 (48 percent).

[2] Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Schools that reported using voluntary written agreements also were asked for whom these agreements were prepared. Of those schools using agreements, one-third prepared them for all parents, while two-thirds (67 percent) prepared them only for certain groups of parents (table 8). Schools with a high concentration of poverty were much more likely to prepare compacts for all parents than were schools with lower concentrations of poverty (51 percent versus 16-22 percent). Schools with minority enrollments of 20 percent or more also were more likely to prepare agreements for all parents (42 and 52 percent) than were schools with minority enrollments below 20 percent (19 and 16 percent).

Of the schools that reported preparing voluntary written agreements for only some of their students, 45 percent prepared them for parents of Title I students, and 80 percent prepared them for various other groups of students (not shown in tables). Other groups of students for whom such agreements were prepared included special education students, students with behavior or discipline problems, and others on an as needed basis.

Other Ways Schools Encourage Parent Involvement in Children's Learning

Goal 8 specifies other types of parent involvement in addition to learning activities at home to help children succeed in school and involve families in school decisionmaking. For example, volunteering in classrooms and schools has been linked to active participation in decisionmaking activities. Schools that welcome and organize volunteers to help in different ways are more likely to support parent organizations and parent representatives on decisionmaking committees (National Education Goals Panel 1995).

Parent Volunteer and Involvement Opportunities

During 1995-96, over 90 percent of all K-8 schools provided parents opportunities to volunteer both inside and outside the classrooms, to assist in fundraising, and to attend meetings of the parent-teacher organization (not shown in tables). These findings did not differ by school characteristics. Thirty-nine percent of schools offer some training for classroom volunteers, either at the school or through the district. The likelihood that parent training was offered was related to school size, urbanicity, and minority enrollment (table 9). As school size increased, volunteer training was more likely to be offered. Similarly, schools in cities were more likely than schools in towns or rural areas to provide this service (55 versus 33 and 22 percent), and schools with minority enrollments of 50 percent or more were more likely to offer training than those with less than 5 percent minority enrollments (49 versus 30 percent).

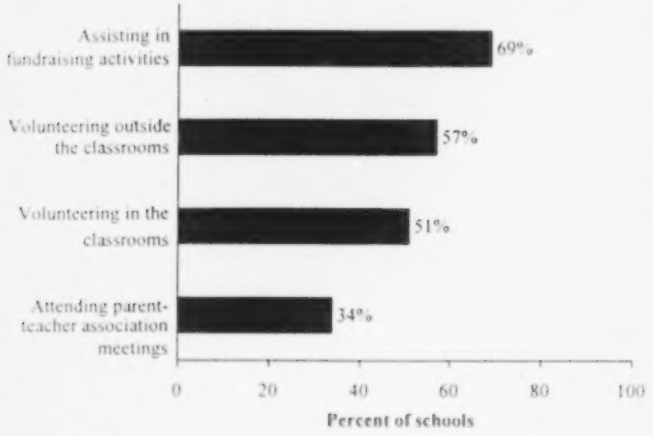
Table 9.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported offering training programs for their classroom volunteers, by selected school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Percent	Standard error
All schools	39	1.6
Size of enrollment		
Less than 300	21	4.1
300-599	39	2.6
600 or more	54	3.1
Urbanicity		
City	55	3.4
Urban fringe	44	3.1
Town	33	4.2
Rural	22	4.2
Percent minority enrollment		
Less than 5	30	4.4
5-19	36	4.4
20-49	43	4.2
50 or more	49	2.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996

When asked how satisfied they were with the parental response to these involvement opportunities, schools expressed the most satisfaction with parents' assistance in fundraising activities, with 69 percent of schools indicating satisfaction with the average parent involvement in this activity (figure 9). Approximately half of all schools expressed satisfaction with the parental response to volunteering both in and outside of the classrooms. Parent-teacher association meetings were the least satisfactory to schools, with 34 percent registering satisfaction with parents' attendance.

Figure 9.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated satisfaction with the average parent involvement in selected opportunities: 1996



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

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Schools' satisfaction with parent involvement varied by poverty concentration and minority enrollment. In general, schools with 50 percent or more minority enrollment or students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch were less likely to report that they were satisfied with parent involvement in these activities than were schools with lower minority enrollments or poverty concentrations (table 10).

Table 10.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated satisfaction with the average parent involvement in selected opportunities, by percent minority enrollment and concentration of poverty in the school: 1996

School characteristic	Assisting in fundraising		Volunteering outside classroom		Volunteering inside classroom		Attending parent-teacher association meetings	
	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.
Percent minority enrollment								
Less than 5	80	3.3	67	4.9	60	4.1	40	4.1
5-19	80	4.0	66	4.5	65	4.4	40	4.2
20-49	66	3.7	52	4.3	46	4.2	28	4.2
50 or more	45	3.5	38	3.9	30	3.1	24	3.3
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*								
Less than 25	85	3.0	76	3.7	68	3.8	45	4.4
25-49	73	4.2	57	4.8	56	4.5	36	4.2
50 or more	51	3.1	39	3.4	33	2.7	21	2.1

*Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: s.e. is standard error.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Parent Resource Centers

When schools create resource centers devoted to parents' needs, they provide a signal that parents are welcome in the building. These centers typically are places where parents can get information on parenting and school-related issues and can gather informally. In some cases, resource centers sponsor classes or workshops for parents and provide referrals to social service and child care agencies (Johnson 1993).

About one-third (35 percent) of all schools reported having a parent resource center, and another 12 percent reported that one was being developed (figure 10). Of the schools that have parent resource centers, 14 percent reported very frequent usage, 46 percent reported somewhat frequent usage, and 37 percent reported that the center was infrequently or never used.

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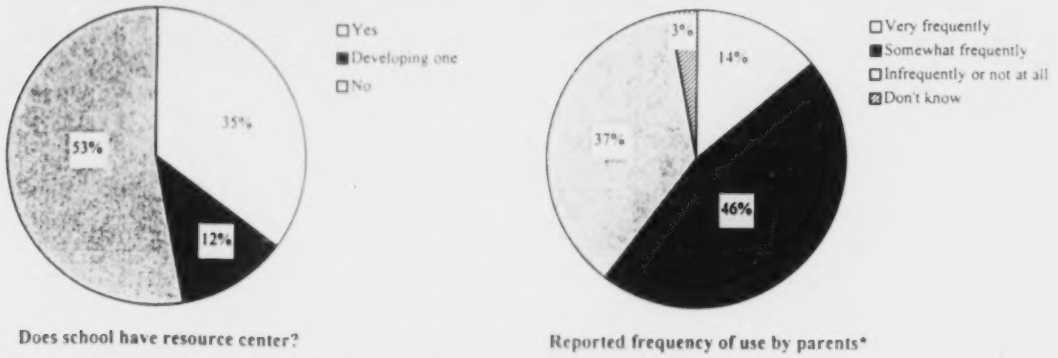
Figure 10.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated having a parent resource center, and the reported frequency of use: 1996



*Based on the estimated number of schools with parent resource centers--21,300 (35 percent).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Assistance from School Districts and States

Individual schools may be limited by their financial and staff resources in engaging parents in their programs and activities. While many states have recently passed laws on different aspects of family involvement in education, some have developed family partnership programs with schools that include small grants for new activities, home/school coordinators, family resource rooms, and other innovations (Epstein 1991). In this survey, schools were asked if they receive assistance on parent involvement activities from either their district or state in the following ways: setting parent involvement policies, providing technical assistance to staff through workshops and other forms of training, providing staff to assist in implementing programs, and funding parent programs. Thirty-eight percent of elementary schools reported receiving financial support from their school districts; 57 to 65 percent reported receiving each of the other types of assistance from the district (figure 11).

It may be difficult for schools to distinguish state assistance from district-level support. About one-third of schools reported receiving state assistance in setting parent involvement policies and providing technical assistance for parent programs to school staff. About one-fifth of schools reported that the state provides staff or funding to assist in parent programs. However, about one-third of schools did not know whether they received any assistance from the state.

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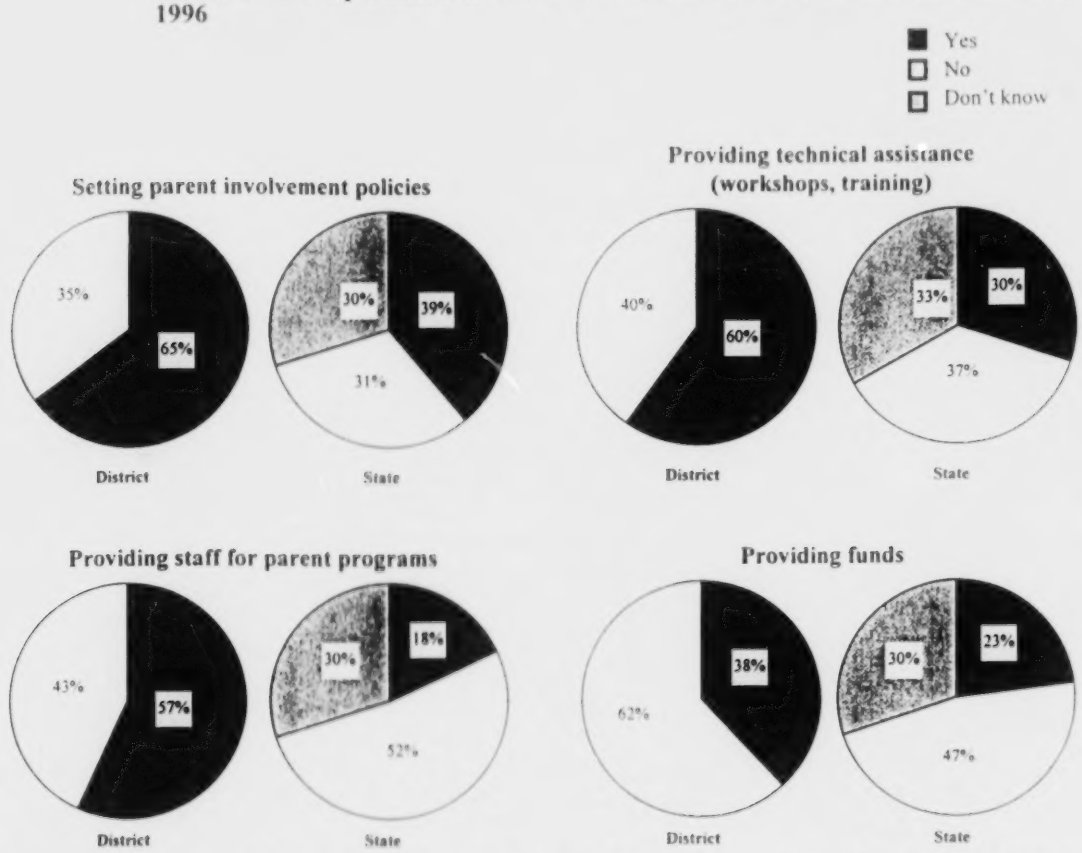
Figure 11.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated they received various kinds of assistance for parent involvement activities from their school district or the state: 1996



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

With respect to district support, large and moderately sized schools, city schools, and schools with poverty concentrations and minority enrollments of at least 50 percent generally were more likely to report receiving aid for parent involvement activities than were small schools, rural schools, schools with poverty concentrations of less than 25 percent, and schools with minority enrollments of less than 20 percent (table 11). In general, state support was more likely to be reported by schools with poverty concentrations and minority enrollments of at least 50 percent than by schools with poverty concentrations of less than 25 percent, and schools with minority enrollments of less than 5 percent (table 12).

Table 11.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported that they received different kinds of assistance on parent involvement activities from their district, by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Setting policies for involving parents in school activities		Providing technical assistance for parent programs to school staff (e.g., workshops, training)		Providing staff to assist the school in parent programs		Providing funds for parent programs	
	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.
All schools	65	1.9	60	2.3	51	2.2	38	2.1
Size of enrollment								
Less than 300	47	4.4	42	4.7	36	4.5	27	4.7
300-599	71	2.6	62	3.2	54	3.1	42	2.9
600 or more	70	3.2	73	3.3	61	3.0	42	3.2
Urbanicity								
City	70	3.7	76	3.9	63	4.2	47	3.2
Urban fringe	71	3.7	66	4.8	60	4.8	40	4.1
Town	63	4.1	52	4.2	43	4.8	37	4.1
Rural	54	5.0	44	5.5	37	4.6	27	4.7
Percent minority enrollment								
Less than 5	54	4.1	45	4.9	38	3.7	31	3.6
5-19	62	5.1	53	4.6	41	5.2	30	5.1
20-49	68	3.7	72	3.6	59	3.8	37	3.8
50 or more	78	2.4	75	2.8	71	2.8	56	3.1
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*								
Less than 25	60	4.9	51	4.0	38	4.0	27	3.8
25-49	66	4.2	61	4.9	53	4.0	33	3.3
50 or more	67	2.3	67	2.8	60	2.8	51	2.6

*Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: s.e. is standard error.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

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Table 12.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported that they received different kinds of assistance on parent involvement activities from their state, by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Setting policies for involving parents in school activities		Providing technical assistance for parent programs to school staff (e.g., workshops, training)		Providing staff to assist the school in parent programs		Providing funds for parent programs	
	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.
All schools	39	2.1	30	1.8	18	1.2	23	1.4
Percent minority enrollment								
Less than 5	31	4.1	24	3.7	14	2.5	20	3.2
5-19	35	4.6	26	4.4	15	3.9	17	3.5
20-49	47	4.6	32	4.0	15	2.2	18	2.9
50 or more	48	3.1	38	3.4	31	2.7	38	3.1
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*								
Less than 25	32	3.8	23	3.8	9	2.3	14	3.1
25-49	40	4.1	28	4.0	19	3.6	20	3.3
50 or more	45	2.6	36	2.8	25	2.2	32	2.3

*Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: s.e. is standard error.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Perceived Barriers to Parent Involvement in School Programs

Given a list of concerns that might impede parent involvement in schools, schools indicated to what extent they perceived that each was a barrier. Among the parent-centered barriers, the highest percentage of schools perceived lack of time on the part of parents as a barrier to a great or moderate extent (87 percent) (figure 12). This was followed by lack of parent education to help with school work (38 percent). Cultural or socioeconomic differences and parent attitudes about the school were perceived to be barriers in 23 percent of schools. Language differences between parents and staff was perceived as a barrier by 12 percent of schools.

Of the barriers considered to be centered at the school, more than half of schools (56 percent) perceived that lack of time on the part of school staff created a barrier to parent involvement to a great or moderate extent. About half (48 percent) perceived that lack of staff training in working with parents was also a barrier to parent programs. Staff attitudes towards parents was perceived as a barrier by 18 percent of schools. Concerns about safety in the area after school hours was reported as a barrier in 9 percent of all schools.

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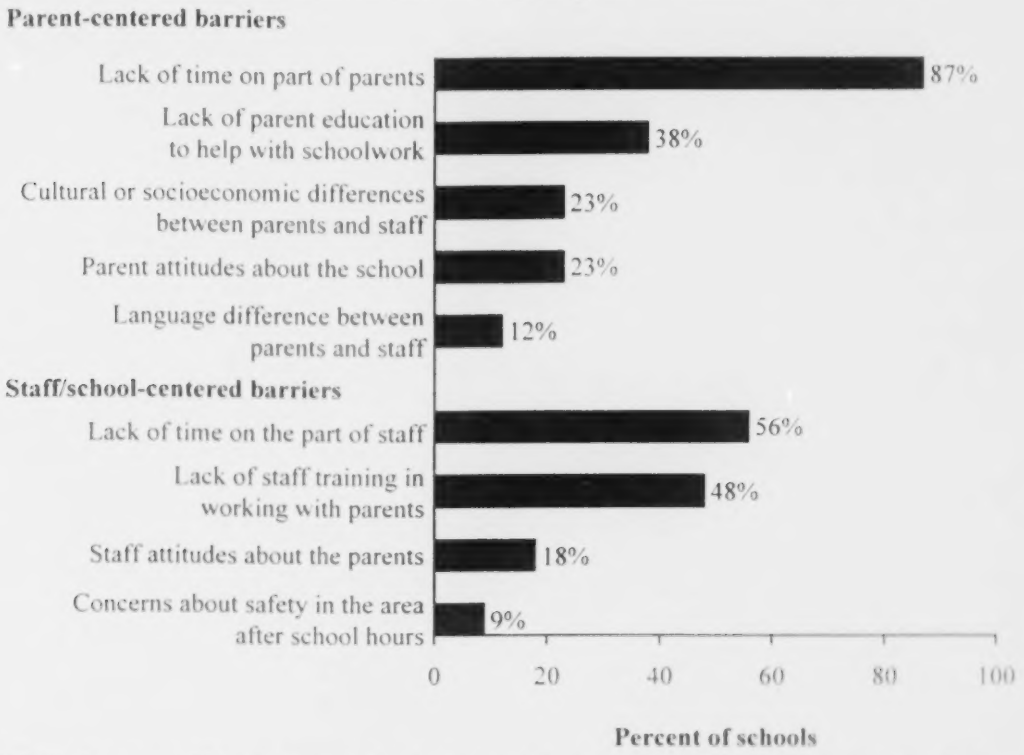
Figure 12.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that perceived various concerns as barriers to parent involvement at their school to a great or moderate extent: 1996



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

The findings reported above look quite different when school views on these barriers are examined by poverty concentration and minority enrollment in the school (table 13). Specifically, more schools with poverty concentrations and minority enrollments of 50 percent or more perceived the following issues to be barriers than schools low on these characteristics:

- Lack of parent education to help with schoolwork,
- Cultural or socioeconomic differences,
- Language differences between parents and staff,
- Parent attitudes about the school,
- Staff attitudes toward parents, and
- Concerns about safety in the area after school hours.

More city schools also reported that concerns about safety in the area after school hours was a barrier to a great or moderate extent than schools in all the other metropolitan areas (21 versus 8 percent or less) (not shown in table).

Table 13.—Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that perceive various concerns as barriers to parent involvement at their school to a great or moderate extent, by high and low poverty concentration* and minority enrollments: 1996

Barrier	Poverty concentration*				Minority enrollment			
	Less than 25 percent		50 percent or more		Less than 5 percent		50 percent or more	
	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.	Percent	s.e.
Lack of parent education to help with homework	12	3.3	64	2.2	24	3.3	65	3.0
Cultural/socioeconomic differences between parents and staff	5	1.9	42	2.7	10	2.0	41	3.3
Language differences between parents and staff	4	1.6	20	2.2	5	1.7	31	2.9
Parent attitudes about the school	11	2.6	35	2.7	14	2.6	33	2.9
Staff attitudes about the parents	15	3.4	25	2.6	9	2.3	26	3.1
Concerns about safety in the area after school hours	2	1.1	19	2.0	2	0.7	27	2.9

*Poverty concentration is defined by the percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. This information was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in analyses by this variable, but are included in totals and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: s.e. is standard error.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Summary

The belief that parent involvement in education is related to children's learning and school performance is supported by a growing body of research. For example, in the report *Strong Families, Strong Schools* (U.S. Department of Education 1994), the authors conclude that when parents are involved in their children's learning, children earn higher grades and test scores, and they stay in school longer. The authors also claim that when parents are involved in a variety of ways at school, the performance of all children in the school tends to improve.

Increasing family involvement in children's learning has become a special focus in school reform efforts. Findings from this survey suggest that schools are making efforts to encourage and accommodate parent participation in school programs. First, over 80 percent of all schools report communicating regularly with parents on a variety of topics, ranging from the goals and objectives of the school's instructional program to conveying good news about students' progress. Many schools also are striving to bridge the language barrier that exists for many families with limited English proficiency, with 85 percent of schools with parents of limited English skills providing interpreters for school meetings or conferences. Second, schools are taking an active role in addressing some of the needs of children and families that go beyond the school

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walls, such as encouraging learning at home and providing information on parenting and child development issues, through newsletters, workshops, and parent resource centers. Moreover, schools are reaching out to families by sponsoring activities intended to encourage parent participation. During the 1995-96 school year, between 84 and 97 percent of schools held events such as open houses, parent conferences, displays and performances of students' work; over 90 percent provided parents volunteer and involvement opportunities. In general, schools report including parents in decisionmaking to a moderate extent, although schools with advisory groups that include parents are more likely to do so.

Parental response to these school efforts varied depending on the activity offered and across all school characteristics. The most consistent differences were found with concentration of poverty and minority enrollment in the school. In general, schools with high poverty concentrations and minority enrollments reported less parent involvement than schools with lower poverty concentrations and minority enrollments. Future research might address ways schools can more successfully attract parents from these groups.

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Appendix A

Survey Methodology
and
Data Reliability

Survey Methodology and Data Reliability

Sample Selection

The sample of elementary schools for the FRSS survey on parent involvement was selected from the 1993-94 NCES Common Core of Data (CCD) Public School Universe File. Over 84,000 public schools are contained in the CCD universe file, of which 60,000 are elementary schools. For this survey, elementary schools are defined as schools beginning with grade 6 or lower and having no grade higher than 8. Special education, alternative, schools not classified by grade span, and "combined" schools that house both elementary and secondary grades were excluded from the survey.

A stratified sample of 900 schools was selected from the elementary school frame. To select the sample, the frame of schools was stratified by concentration of poverty in the school, as determined by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.[2] Within these primary strata, schools were also sorted by enrollment size[3] and then by urbanicity.[4] The sample sizes were then allocated to the primary strata in rough proportion to the aggregate square root of the enrollment of schools in the stratum. The use of the square root of enrollment to determine the sample allocation is efficient for estimating both categorical school-level characteristics (e.g., number or percentage of schools that have voluntary written agreements with parents) and quantitative characteristics related to the size of the school (e.g., the number of families that received home visits from school staff). The sample size was large enough to permit limited analysis of the questionnaire (along one dimension) by the four regions, four urbanicity levels, three enrollment size categories, three levels of poverty concentration, and four categories of minority enrollments. However, because of the relatively small sample size, it is difficult to separate the independent effects of each characteristic (tables A-1 through A-3).

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[2] Categories used in sampling for the percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch were: 0-24.9 percent; 25-49.9 percent; 50-74.9 percent; 75 percent or more; missing.

[3] Categories used in sampling for enrollment size were: less than 300; 300-499; 500-999; 1,00-1,499; 1,500 or more.

[4] Categories used in sampling for urbanicity were: city; urban fringe; town; rural.

Table A-1.—Estimated percent of public elementary schools (K-8) with different levels of poverty concentration (as defined by percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch), by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*		
	Less than 25	25-49	50 or more
All schools	33	28	39
Size of enrollment			
Less than 300	35	26	40
300-599	32	29	39
600 or more	32	30	38
Urbanicity			
City	18	23	59
Urban fringe	51	25	24
Town	32	34	34
Rural	31	31	38
Percent minority enrollment			
Less than 5	49	32	20
5-19	51	32	16
20-49	25	36	39
50 or more	2	12	87

*Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: Because of rounding, percents may not add to 100.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Table A-2.—Estimated percent of public elementary schools (K-8) with different levels of minority enrollments, by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Percent minority enrollment			
	Less than 5	5-19	20-49	50 or more
All schools	30	25	22	23
Size of enrollment				
Less than 300	51	26	9	15
300-599	26	26	24	23
600 or more	18	22	30	30
Urbanicity				
City	8	18	24	50
Urban fringe	21	29	29	20
Town	37	32	19	12
Rural	56	20	14	9
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*				
Less than 25	45	38	17	1
25-49	34	28	29	10
50 or more	15	10	22	52

*Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: Because of rounding, percents may not add to 100.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

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Table A-3.—Number and percent of responding public elementary schools (K-8) in the study sample and estimated number and percent of schools the sample represents, by school characteristics: 1996

School characteristic	Respondent sample		National estimate	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All schools	810	100	61,240	100
Size of enrollment				
Less than 300	130	16	15,840	26
300-599	375	46	27,590	45
600 or more	305	38	17,800	29
Urbanicity				
City	280	35	15,440	25
Urban fringe	188	23	15,920	26
Town	189	23	15,210	25
Rural	153	19	14,670	24
Geographic region				
Northeast	136	17	11,240	18
Southeast	202	25	13,030	21
Central	182	22	18,420	30
West	290	36	18,550	30
Percent minority enrollment				
Less than 5	163	20	18,470	30
5-19	144	18	15,210	25
20-49	168	21	13,440	22
50 or more	335	41	14,120	23
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*				
Less than 25	153	19	19,510	33
25-49	170	21	16,660	28
50 or more	470	59	23,080	39

*Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was missing for about 3 percent of the sampled schools. These schools are not included in this analysis, but are included in the total and in analyses by other school characteristics.

NOTE: Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

Respondent and Response Rates

In early April 1996 questionnaires were mailed to 900 elementary school principals. The principal was asked either to complete the questionnaire or to have it completed by the person in the school who was most knowledgeable about parent involvement in the school. Telephone followup of nonrespondents was initiated in late April, and data collection was completed by June 1996. Five schools were found to be ineligible, and a total of 810 schools completed the survey. Thus, the unweighted final response rate was 91 percent. The weighted final response was 92 percent.

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Sampling and Nonsampling Errors

The response data were weighted to produce national estimates. The weights were designed to adjust for the variable probabilities of selection and differential nonresponse. The findings in this report are estimates based on the sample selected and, consequently, are subject to sampling variability.

The survey estimates are also subject to nonsampling errors that can arise because of nonobservation (nonresponse or noncoverage) errors, errors of reporting, and errors made in collection of the data. These errors can sometimes bias the data. Nonsampling errors may include such problems as the differences in the respondents' interpretation of the meaning of the questions; memory effects; misrecording of responses; incorrect editing, coding, and data entry; differences related to the particular time the survey was conducted; or errors in data preparation. While general sampling theory can be used in part to determine how to estimate the sampling variability of a statistic, nonsampling errors are not easy to measure and, for measurement purposes, usually require that an experiment be conducted as part of the data collection procedures or that data external to the study be used. To minimize the potential for nonsampling errors, the questionnaire was pretested with public school principals like those who completed the survey. During the design of the survey and the survey pretest, an effort was made to check for consistency of interpretation of questions and to eliminate ambiguous items. The questionnaire and instructions were extensively reviewed by the National Center for Education Statistics. Manual and machine editing of the questionnaire responses were conducted to check the data for accuracy and consistency. Cases with missing or inconsistent items were recontacted by telephone. Data were keyed with 100 percent verification.

Variances

The standard error is a measure of the variability of estimates due to sampling. It indicates the variability of a sample estimate that would be obtained from all possible samples of a given design and size. Standard errors are used as a measure of the precision expected from a particular sample. If all possible samples were surveyed under similar conditions, intervals of 1.96 standard errors below to 1.96 standard errors above a particular statistic would include the true population parameter being estimated in about 95 percent of the samples. This is a 95 percent confidence interval. For example, the estimated percentage of public elementary schools reporting that they sponsored an open house is 97 percent, and the estimated standard error is 0.8 percent. The 95 percent confidence interval for the statistic extends from [97- (0.8 x 1.96) to 97 + (0.8 x 1.96)], or from 95.4 to 98.6.

Estimates of standard errors for this report were computed using a technique known as jackknife replication method. Standard errors for all of the estimates are presented in the tables. All specific statements of comparison made in this report have been tested for statistical significance through *t*-tests adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni adjustment, and they are significant at the 95 percent confidence level or better.

Background Information

The survey was performed under contract with Westat, using the NCES Fast Response Survey System (FRSS). Westat's Project Director was Elizabeth Farris, and the Survey Manager was Nancy Carey. Judi Carpenter, now retired, was the NCES Project Officer during data collection. Shelley Burns is the current NCES Project Officer, and Edith McArthur is the FRSS Planning Officer. The data were requested by Oliver Moles, National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students, and Mary Rollefson of the National Center for Education Statistics, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, and by the National Education Goals Panel.

This report was reviewed by the following individuals:

Outside NCES

- Carol Sue Fromboluti, National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education
- Cindy Prince, National Education Goals Panel

Inside NCES

- Jonaki Bose, Surveys and Cooperative Systems Group
- Robert Burton, Statistical Standards and Services Group
- Kathryn Chandler, Surveys and Cooperative Systems Group
- Mary Frase, Data Development and Longitudinal Studies Group
- Edith McArthur, Data Development and Longitudinal Studies Group

For more information about the Fast Response Survey System or the *Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8,* contact Shelley Burns, Data Development and Longitudinal Studies Group, National Center for Education Statistics, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 555 New Jersey Avenue,

NW, Washington, DC 20208-5651, telephone (202) 219-1463. This and other NCES reports are available on the Internet at www.ed.gov/NCES/.

Glossary of Terms

Terms Defined on the Survey Questionnaire

Advisory Group or Policy Council - A committee that includes parents, separate from any parent-teacher organization, designed to address school policy issues and make recommendations to school personnel.

Child care programs - Daily programs that provide recreational or educational activities to students at the school outside of normal school hours.

Homework helpline - A school-sponsored telephone service that provides information about students' homework assignments to parents and students.

Sample Universe and Classification Variables

Urbanicity - based on the locale codes as defined in the Common Core of Data (CCD):

City - a central city of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Urban fringe - a place within an MSA of a central city, but not primarily its central city.

Town - a place not within an MSA, but with a population greater than or equal to 2,500 and defined as urban by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Rural - a place with a population less than 2,500 and defined as rural by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Geographic Region - as defined by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP):

Northeast - Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Southeast - Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Central - Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

West - Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Size of Enrollment

The number of students enrolled at the school, based on data in the 1993-94 CCD file.

Percent Minority Enrollment

The percent of students enrolled in the school whose race or ethnicity is classified as one of the following: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, or Hispanic, based on data in the 1993-94 CCD file.

Poverty Concentration

The percent of students at the school eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, based on responses to question 22 on the survey questionnaire.

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Appendix B

Table of Standard Errors for the Figures

Table 1a.—Estimates and standard errors for figures: 1996

Figure	Estimate	Standard error
Figure 1: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported always or frequently communicating with parents by various means: 1996		
Parents are given written information about the school's performance on standardized tests	85	1.5
Parents are given written interim reports during grading periods	83	1.6
Parents are given written information about the goals and objectives of the school's regular instructional program	83	1.4
Parents are notified about children's ability-group placements	79	3.0
Parents received positive phone calls or notes from teachers when their children's performance improves at school	72	2.0
Parents are given examples of work that meets high standards	60	2.0
Parents are requested to sign off on homework	57	2.2
Parents have access to a school-sponsored helpline	24	1.8
Figure 2: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported providing parents with information on community services, by selected school characteristics: 1996		
Size of enrollment		
Less than 300	76	5.1
300-599	91	1.8
600 or more	94	1.3
Urbanicity		
City	93	1.8
Urban fringe	92	2.7
Town	88	2.6
Rural	78	5.0
Percent minority enrollment		
Less than 5	81	3.8
5-19	87	3.7
20-49	92	2.2
50 or more	95	1.3
Figure 3: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported using selected methods to provide information to parents on various topics: 1996		
Newsletters or other printed materials	95	1.0
Workshops or classes	75	1.7
Take-home audio/video	23	2.1

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Table 1a.—Estimates and standard errors for figures: 1996--Continued

Figure	Estimate	Standard error
Figure 4: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported sponsoring workshops or classes to inform parents about various topics, by selected school characteristics: 1996		
Size of enrollment		
Less than 300	61	3.9
300-599	79	2.5
600 or more	82	2.4
Urbanicity		
City	86	2.6
Urban fringe	83	2.8
Town	72	4.1
Rural	58	4.1
Percent minority enrollment		
Less than 5	63	4.1
5-19	79	3.6
20-49	77	3.6
50 or more	85	2.6
Figure 5: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported that various staff members made visits to students' homes: 1996		
Teacher	73	2.3
School counselor	61	2.7
Home/school coordinator	21	2.0
Other staff	76	2.4
Figure 6: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported that home visits were made by a home/school coordinator, by poverty concentration and minority enrollment: 1996		
Percent poverty concentration		
Less than 25	14	4.3
25-49	14	3.6
50 or more	30	2.5
Percent minority enrollment		
Less than 5	18	4.4
5-19	13	3.8
20-49	17	3.1
50 or more	34	3.4
Figure 7: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported providing various services for parents with limited English skills: 1996		
Interpreters for meetings or conferences	85	1.8
Translations of newsletters and school notices	66	2.8
School signs printed in different languages	28	2.0

Table 1a.—Estimates and standard errors for figures: 1996--Continued

Figure	Estimate	Standard error
Figure 8: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that reported considering parent input in school decisionmaking to a great or moderate extent, by inclusion of parents in an advisory group or policy council: 1996		
Parents on advisory group		
Developing parent involvement activities	72	2.0
Discipline policies and procedures	56	1.7
Curriculum or overall instructional program	53	2.5
The design of special programs	51	2.4
Health-related topics or policies, such as drug or alcohol abuse	49	2.2
Allocation of funds	44	2.6
Library books and materials	35	1.9
Monitoring or evaluating teachers	6	0.9
No parents on advisory group		
Developing parent involvement activities	53	5.2
Discipline policies and procedures	31	4.8
Curriculum or overall instructional program	22	4.0
The design of special programs	26	4.5
Health-related topics or policies, such as drug or alcohol abuse	37	4.9
Allocation of funds	21	3.6
Library books and materials	17	4.4
Monitoring or evaluating teachers	3	1.8
Figure 9: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated satisfaction with the average parent involvement in selected opportunities: 1996		
Assisting in fundraising activities	69	2.1
Volunteering outside the classrooms	57	2.4
Volunteering in the classrooms	51	2.0
Attending parent-teacher association meetings	34	2.2
Figure 10: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated having a parent resource center, and the reported frequency of use: 1996		
Does school have resource center?		
Yes	35	2.3
Developing one	12	1.2
No	53	2.2
Reported frequency of use by parents		
Very frequently	14	2.3
Somewhat frequently	46	3.4
Infrequently or not at all	37	3.1
Don't know	3	1.1

Table 1a.—Estimates and standard errors for figures: 1996--Continued

Figure	Estimate	Standard error
Figure 11: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that indicated they received various kinds of assistance for parent involvement activities from their school district or the state: 1996		
Assistance from district		
Setting parent involvement policies	65	1.9
Providing technical assistance (workshops, training)	60	2.3
Providing staff for parent programs	57	2.2
Providing funds	38	2.1
Assistance from state		
Setting parent involvement policies	39	2.1
Providing technical assistance (workshops, training)	30	1.8
Providing staff for parent programs	18	1.2
Providing funds	23	1.4
Figure 12: Percent of public elementary schools (K-8) that perceived various concerns as barriers to parent involvement at their school to a great or moderate extent: 1996		
Parent-centered barriers		
Lack of time on part of parents	87	1.5
Lack of parent education to help with schoolwork	38	2.1
Cultural or socioeconomic differences between parents and staff	23	1.6
Parent attitudes about the school	23	1.4
Language difference between parent and staff	12	1.2
Staff/school-centered barriers		
Lack of time on the part of staff	56	2.3
Lack of staff training in working with parents	48	1.9
Staff attitudes toward parents	18	1.7
Safety in the area after school hours	9	1.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, "Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8," FRSS 58, 1996.

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Appendix C

Survey Form

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
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SURVEY ON FAMILY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, K-8

FAST RESPONSE SURVEY SYSTEM

O.M.B. NO.: 1850-0726
EXPIRATION DATE: 5/31/96

This survey is authorized by law (P.L. 103-382). While you are not required to respond, your cooperation is needed to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely.

DEFINITIONS FOR THIS SURVEY

Advisory Group or Policy Council - A committee that includes parents, separate from any parent-teacher organization, designed to address school policy issues and make recommendations to school personnel.

Child care programs - Daily programs that provide recreational or educational activities to students at the school outside of normal school hours.

Homework helpline - A school-sponsored telephone service that provides information about students' homework assignments to parents and students.

AFFIX LABEL HERE

IF ABOVE INFORMATION IS INCORRECT, PLEASE MAKE CORRECTIONS DIRECTLY ON LABEL.

Name of person completing form: _____ Title: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Best days and times to reach you (in case of questions): _____

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:	IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT:
WESTAT 1650 Research Boulevard Rockville, Maryland 20850 Attention: 900211 Carey	Nancy Carey 1-800-937-8281, ext. 4467 Fax: 1-800-254-0984 E-mail: CAREYN1@WESTAT.COM

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FRSS Form No. 58, 4/96

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Please answer this questionnaire only for the grade range of the school designated on the cover page, but exclude pre-K classes. Refer to the definitions on the cover for words in bold type.

1. What grades are taught at this school? *(Circle all that apply.)*

   K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

2. In column A, indicate which kinds of activities have been held at your school during the 1995-96 school year. In column B, select the number that corresponds to the BEST description of the typical parent attendance for each type of activity. *NOTE: When answering column B, if some events at your school are held primarily for certain classes or students, consider the attendance only for the parents of students who participate in the event. (Circle one number in column A; if yes, circle one number in column B.)*

	A. Activity held?		B. Parents attending?				
	Yes	No	Most or all	More than half	About half	Less than half	Few
a. Open House or Back-to-School Night	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
b. Regularly-scheduled schoolwide parent-teacher conferences	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
c. Arts events such as plays or dance or musical performances	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
d. Sports events such as Field Days or other athletic demonstrations or events	1	2	1	2	3	4	5
e. Science fairs or other academic demonstrations or events	1	2	1	2	3	4	5

3. How often do the following forms of communication between parents and staff occur throughout your school? *(Circle one number in each row.)*

	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
a. Parents are given written interim reports during grading periods	1	2	3	4
b. Parents are requested to sign off on homework	1	2	3	4
c. Parents have access to a school-sponsored "**homework helpline**" for information on assignments	1	2	3	4
d. Parents are given written information about the goals and objectives of the school's regular instructional program	1	2	3	4
e. Parents are given written information about the school's overall performance on standardized tests	1	2	3	4
f. Parents receive positive phone calls or notes from teachers when their children's performance improves at school	1	2	3	4
g. Parents are given examples of work that meets high standards	1	2	3	4
h. Parents are notified about children's ability-group placements. *(If your school does no ability grouping, check the box and go on to Question 4.)* ☐	1	2	3	4

4. Does your school provide information to parents on the following topics? If yes, please indicate how it is offered. *(Circle one number in column A; if yes, circle all that apply in column B.)*

	A. Information provided?		B. How offered?		
	Yes	No	Workshops or classes	Take-home audio/ video	Newsletters or other printed material
a. Child or adolescent development	1	2	1	2	3
b. Nutrition, health, or safety	1	2	1	2	3
c. Parenting skills	1	2	1	2	3
d. Helping with homework	1	2	1	2	3
e. Developing study skills	1	2	1	2	3
f. Ideas for learning activities outside of school	1	2	1	2	3
g. Information on community services to help children or their families	1	2	1	2	3

5. Does your school have a parent resource center, that is, a place where parents can get information on parenting and school-related issues and can gather informally?

Yes ..... 1 *(Continue with Question 6.)* Currently developing one 2
No ..... 3] *(Skip to Question 7.)*

6. To what extent do parents make use of this parent resource center?

Very frequently ..... 1 Infrequently or not at all 3
Somewhat frequently ..... 2 Don't know 4

7. Do staff at your school make visits to students' homes?

Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 *(Skip to Question 10.)*

8. Who makes these visits to students' homes? *(Circle all that apply.)*

Teachers ..... 1 School counselor 3
Home school coordinator ... 2 Other staff ..... 4 *(specify)*_____

9. Approximately what percent of the families at your school have received at least one home visit during the 1995-96 school year? _____%

10. Does your school provide any of the following for parents with limited English skills? *If your school has NO parents with limited English skills, check the box and skip to Question 11* ..... ☐

	Yes	No
a. Interpreters for meetings or parent-teacher conferences	1	2
b. Translations of printed materials, such as newsletters or school notices	1	2
c. School signs printed in different languages	1	2

11. In column A, indicate which opportunities are available to parents at your school during the 1995-96 school year. In column B, select the number that corresponds to the statement that BEST describes how satisfactory the average parent involvement is for each opportunity. *(Circle one number in column A; if yes, circle one number in column B.)*

	A. Opportunity available?		B. Parent involvement?			
	Yes	No	Satisfactory	Moderately satisfactory	Moderately unsatis-factory	Un-satisfactory
a. Serving as volunteers in the classrooms	1	2	1	2	3	4
b. Serving as volunteers outside the classrooms	1	2	1	2	3	4
c. Assisting in fundraising activities	1	2	1	2	3	4
d. Attending meetings of the parent-teacher association	1	2	1	2	3	4

12. Does your school or school district have a training program for its classroom volunteers?

Yes ..... 1 No 2

13. Please indicate the extent to which parent input is considered in making decisions on the following issues at your school.

	Parent input considered?			
	Great extent	Moderate extent	Small extent	Not at all
a. Allocation of funds	1	2	3	4
b. Curriculum or overall instructional program	1	2	3	4
c. The design of special programs	1	2	3	4
d. Library books and materials	1	2	3	4
e. Discipline policies and procedures	1	2	3	4
f. Health-related topics or policies, such as drug or alcohol abuse	1	2	3	4
g. Monitoring or evaluating teachers	1	2	3	4
h. Developing parent involvement activities	1	2	3	4

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14. Does your school have an **Advisory Group or Policy Council** that includes parents (*other than as part of a parent-teacher organization*)?

Yes ..... 1 No 2

15. Does your school receive assistance on parent involvement activities from your school district or state in any of the following ways? *(Circle one number in the district column and one number in the state column.)*

	Assistance from: District?		State?		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Don't know
a. Setting policies for involving parents in school activities	1	2	1	2	3
b. Providing technical assistance for parent programs to school staff (e.g., workshops, training)	1	2	1	2	3
c. Providing staff to assist your school in parent programs	1	2	1	2	3
d. Providing funds for parent programs	1	2	1	2	3

16. To what extent are the following concerns barriers to parent involvement in your school?

	Great extent	Moderate extent	Small extent	Not at all
a. Lack of time on the part of parents	1	2	3	4
b. Lack of time on the part of staff	1	2	3	4
c. Lack of staff training in working with parents	1	2	3	4
d. Cultural or socioeconomic differences between parents and staff	1	2	3	4
e. Language differences between parents and staff	1	2	3	4
f. Lack of parent education to help with schoolwork	1	2	3	4
g. Parent attitudes about the school	1	2	3	4
h. Staff attitudes about the parents	1	2	3	4
i. Safety in the area after school hours	1	2	3	4

17. Does your school have voluntary written agreements (e.g., compacts or learning contracts) between the school and individual parents on what each will do to help students succeed in school?

Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 *(Skip to Question 20.)*

18. For whom are these voluntary written agreements prepared?

All parents ..... 1 *(Skip to Question 20.)*
Some parents 2

19. For parents of which students do you request such written agreements? *(Circle all that apply.)*

Title I 1
Other ..... 2 *(specify)*_____

20. Are there daily **child care programs** offered to students at your school (regardless of sponsorship)?

Yes ..... 1 No ..... 2 *(Skip to Question 22.)*

21. When are these child care programs offered? *(Circle all that apply.)*

Before school ..... 1 After school 2

22. What percent of the students in your school are eligible for the free- or reduced-price lunch program? _____%

23. Does your school receive federal Title I funds?

Yes ..... 1 No 2

24. Does your school operate a Title I school-wide program?

Yes ..... 1 No 2

THANK YOU. PLEASE RETAIN A COPY OF THIS SURVEY FOR YOUR FILES.

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